British Columbia Innovation Council

2016/17 – 2018/19
SERVICE PLAN

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Accountability Statement

The 2016/2017 - 2018/2019 BCIC Service Plan was prepared under the Board's direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act* and the BC Reporting Principles. The plan is consistent with Government's strategic priorities and fiscal plan. The Board is accountable for the contents of the plan, including what has been included in the plan and how it has been reported. The board is responsible for the validity and reliability of the information included in the plan.

To the best of our knowledge, the significant assumptions, policy decisions, events and identified risks are current and have been considered in preparing this plan. The performance measures presented are consistent with the Taxpayer Accountability Principles, BCIC's mandate and goals, and focus on aspects critical to the organization's performance. The targets in this plan have been determined based on an assessment of BCIC's operating environment, forecast conditions, risk assessment and past performance.

Derek Lew, Board Chair
BC Innovation Council

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Strategic Direction and Context

Strategic Direction

The British Columbia Innovation Council (BCIC) is our province's lead agency promoting the development and application of advanced or innovative technologies to meet the needs of industry in BC. Our purpose is aligned with that of the BC Jobs Plan and our operations adhere to the Taxpayer Accountability Principles. We see job creation and increased investment in the technology sector as measures of our effectiveness. We develop and implement initiatives that directly support the successful commercialization of technology businesses.

As outlined in BCIC's 2016/17 Mandate Letter, we will continue to work in partnership with Government on the full implementation of the approved recommendations of our Mandate Review and will refine and implement outcome-based metrics including measures of job creation and investment. This includes building and maintaining partnerships and diversifying programming in order to strengthen entrepreneurship development in the BC Jobs Plan's priority sectors and to support regional expansion.

Operating Environment

BC's technology sector, one of the largest contributors to the BC economy, employs more people than mining, forestry, and oil and gas combined. The average annual salary in the sector is $75,000, 60 per cent more than the BC average. Our high standard of living, Pacific location, and educated workforce make us an attractive centre for technology entrepreneurs. In 2014/15 alone, BC saw six large initial public offerings in BC's life sciences sector including Aquinox Pharmaceuticals, ProNAi Therapeutics and Xenon Pharmaceuticals. Local companies PlentyOfFish, Recon Instruments and Coastal Contacts were acquired in multi-million dollar deals that will see them continue to drive the BC economy.

The potential development of the energy sector in BC's north offers opportunities, and it is vital BCIC continue to deliver relevant commercialization programs that support these industries. Similarly, there is a need to bring technology innovations to traditional industries including forestry, mining, oil and gas, and agrifoods, as well as clean technology, health and life sciences, digital media and information and communication technologies. By scaling our programs to meet the growing needs of the market, we enhance the entrepreneurial community and encourage the commercialization of technology.

A skilled labour force is required to support the growing technology sector, and youth need to be engaged in technology courses and science literacy that will give them the skills to advance.

A significant issue is access to capital for small and mid-sized technology companies. Viable new businesses are finding it relatively easy to find individual investors, or 'angels', but this initial support needs to extend beyond the early stages of a company's growth.

BCIC operates with support from its primary funder, the Ministry of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services. BC's innovation economy is a long-term opportunity and requires partners at all levels of government, institutions and the private sector to remain committed. For BCIC's ongoing risks and mitigation plans, see Appendix B. No significant shifts in operations are expected.

Performance Plan
Goals, Strategies, Measures and Targets

BCIC's vision is to create a cohesive, collaborative BC tech community that drives growth across all sectors of BC's economy, producing results that are a model for the world.

Four goals guide our actions:

1. Commercializing innovative technology.
2. Developing and enhancing entrepreneurial skills.
3. Focusing resources on entrepreneurs who will build their companies in BC.
4. Engaging BC companies with industry opportunities and targeted growth programs.

Together these goals provide a strong foundation for meeting our legislated mandate and supporting Government's priorities. Strategies, performance measures and targets support each goal.

While BCIC works to achieve the above goals, we are committed to transparency and accountability in the management of BCIC's budget and activities. BCIC adheres to the Taxpayer Accountability Principles and operates under established Standards of Conduct.

BCIC's strategic engagement plan, for the Taxpayer Accountability Principles and the Standards of Conduct, ensures that acceptance is documented for the BCIC Board, executive team and staff and is embedded in BCIC's recruitment process for both new Board members and staff.

As well, BCIC's Board Chair and CEO participate in regular meetings with the Minister and Deputy Minister of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services to focus on performance against the Taxpayer Accountability Principles, results and strategic decision-making.

Goal 1: Commercializing Innovative Technology.

Commercialization is an entrepreneurial activity that takes a technology or intellectual property and creates a business around it. BCIC's goal of facilitating the commercialization of innovative technology is supported by its network of acceleration programs, programs that develop entrepreneurial talent at the post-secondary level, and support of events that increase the number of entrepreneurs and new business opportunities across BC.

Strategies

- Build a network of Venture Acceleration Programs.
- Facilitate post-secondary programs to support entrepreneurial talent development.
- Sponsor and promote appropriate conferences, competitions and events.
- Facilitate the introduction of BC-based companies with potential partners and actively identify opportunities that expand the scope of engagement and commercial opportunities.

Performance Measure 1: Patent-protected innovations and trade secrets.

Performance Measure	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Forecast	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
The percentage of ventures in BCIC-funded programs with patent protection for their innovations or a structured approach to maintaining trade secrecy.	45%*	40%	40%	40%	40%

Data Source: Progress reports from program partners.

* 2014\15 data based on responses from 565 participating companies.

Discussion

BCIC supports programs and initiatives that help innovative technologies reach the market. A patent demonstrates the innovative nature of a startup's technology. Trade secrets are also an effective way of shielding intellectual property. A product based on a novel technology tends to have a stronger chance of competing against established players because it can offer differentiated value to customers. Companies with patented intellectual property are better able to defend their innovation when they become successful in the market. By encouraging the use of patents and trade secrets, BCIC's programs will improve the growth rate and survivability of small and medium-sized businesses located in BC.

The target represents a goal to achieve a high level of patent protection. 2013/14 was the first year this performance measure was tracked. BCIC has now determined that a target of 40% would be an indicator of success for the program because not all entrepreneurs need to secure such protection. Some ventures may still be at the early idea stage and not yet ready to file a patent. Other ventures in the information and communication technology field (including digital media and software as a service) often do not file patent protection or register trade secrets because copyright already exists for their source code. In 2014/2015, about 40% of companies in BCIC-funded programs were in the digital media and software as a service field.

Goal 2: Developing and Enhancing Entrepreneurial Skills.

BCIC works with its program partners to help British Columbians become successful entrepreneurs.

Strategies

- Provide relevant training to support early-stage entrepreneurs to commercialize concepts.
- Partner with educational institutions and industry organizations to provide relevant knowledge and training for emerging entrepreneurs.

Performance Measure 2.1: Health Score of ventures in BC Acceleration Network.

Performance Measure	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Forecast	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
The overall level to which BCIC Acceleration Network clients have a solid business foundation for the success of their companies.[1]	56 [2]	85*	87*	89*	90*

Data Source: Progress reports from program partners.

[1] This measure presents an overall score out of a possible 100 points. The score is determined by a set of indicators identifed by BCIC as important elements for a venture to progress.

[2] For comparative purposes, the results for 2014\15 would be approximately 85 using the new criteria discussed below.

Discussion

BCIC activities support job creation in BC. To do so, it is essential that startup companies in BCIC-funded programs progress from early-stage ventures to larger mature companies with job opportunities. The BCIC Health Score reflects the level to which startup companies in BCIC-funded programs are on track to progress into companies that will experience job growth. The previous Health Score model has been updated to reduce subjectivity of the previous rating system and better reflect startup progress relative to jobs, revenue, investments and skill development.

*See ***Appendix C: Evolution of BCIC's Health Score*** for a discussion regarding a recent analysis of this performance measure and explanation on how the new Health Score method was determined and how targets have been set and will be measured for 2015/16 onwards.

Performance Measure 2.2: Participant evaluation of the effectiveness of BCIC's programs and services.

Performance Measure	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Forecast	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
The percentage of participants in BCIC-funded programs who confirm BCIC's programs have a high value impact in advancing their technology venture.[1]	92%*	90%	90%	90%	90%

Data Source: Progress reports from program partners.

[1] This measure is based on sample surveys where high impact value is defined as a value of 7 or more on a 10-point evaluation scale.

* 2014\15 data based on responses from 440 participating companies.

Discussion
Confirmation from entrepreneurs that BCIC-funded programs enable their ventures to progress adds perspective to how BCIC measures progress. Our goal is to support programs that provide high value to technology entrepreneurs, equipping them with the knowledge and tools to advance their technologies. Evaluation results enable us to assess how well we are delivering on our mission. Reports from the participants in BCIC-supported programs and services help to shape, refine and improve our offerings and position BCIC as an integral component to the growth and success of our client companies. Performance targets are based on similar past BCIC surveys. BCIC aims to deliver high value to 90% of ventures in 2015/16, and beyond this, to continue to maintain this high level of effectiveness.

Goal 3: Focusing Resources on Entrepreneurs who will Build their Companies in BC.

BCIC invests in opportunities for startup companies who will build their companies in our province.

Strategies

- Work with program partners to focus program resources on entrepreneurs who can achieve early customer acquisition while maintaining base operations in BC.

Performance Measure 3: Entrepreneurs who can build a successful venture based in BC.

Performance Measure	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Forecast	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
The percentage of participants in BCIC-funded programs who are assessed as being able to be successful in their venture without needing to leave BC to do so.[1]	87%	90%	90%	90%	90%

Data Source: Progress reports from program partners.
[1] This measure is based on the experience and knowledge of Executives-in-Residence and mentors who evaluate the opportunities they are supporting.

Discussion
Entrepreneurs with early stage innovative concepts and business ventures are highly mobile. For many, it is tempting to move to new locations outside of BC to be near their key customers, suppliers or financiers. Of the three prime relationships, the most compelling is that with customers, who are the ultimate source of value in an entrepreneurial venture. BCIC assesses the likelihood that a venture will stay in BC to avoid committing taxpayer resources to ventures that are destined to create jobs elsewhere.

As a result of effective assessment during in-take sessions, the vast majority (87% in 2014/15) of ventures supported by BCIC-funded programs are expected to be successful without needing to leave BC. Some BCIC-funded programs are aimed to cultivate entrepreneurs among the student population. While these programs are highly effective in equipping the next cohort of potential entrepreneurs with the right skills, it is conceivable that a small percentage of student-focused ventures accepted into these programs will need to exit BC to be successful. Thus, a realistic target of 90% has been established.

Goal 4: Engaging BC Companies with Industry Opportunities and Targeted Growth Programs.

Strategies

- Assist high potential companies to identify critical talent, capital and market opportunities to increase jobs and accelerate revenue growth.
- Match innovators with industry driven needs and opportunities in the Clean Technology and Natural Resource sectors, where BC has a competitive advantage.
- Provide high potential companies with tailored input and assistance as to how they can best prepare and position their companies to capitalize on growth and industry opportunities.
- Strategically assist BC companies across all sectors to increase their competitive advantage through adoption of innovative technology.

Performance Measure 4: BCIC supported companies that yielded improved company growth.

Performance Measure	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Forecast	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target	2018/19 Target
The average score of participants engaged in BCIC-funded advanced access programming that received support, yielding improved company growth (via talent, capital, market) and industry opportunities[1]	N/A	N/A	75	80	85

Data Source: Future progress reports from program partners.

[1] This measure is based on participant surveys and presents an average of the overall weighted score out of a possible 100 points.

Discussion

British Columbia has had significant success in launching highly innovative startups, however, it is Canada's mid-sized businesses that have the greatest growth and impact on the economy. These growing and mid-sized companies hire more employees, pay larger wages and have the resources to invest and export. As such, BCIC's advanced access programming seeks to catapult high potential startups and established companies into this rapid growth phase.

As part of the BC Jobs Plan, the priorities of the #BCTECH Strategy are investments in capital, cultivating talent, accessing markets to support the growth of technology companies, and raising overall employement and revenue in the technology sectors. To support these priorities, BCIC aims to further the development of medium-sized firms in BC by providing these high potential companies with advanced access to growth (talent, capital, market) and industry opportunities to accelerate job growth and economic returns for the province. This new measure is designed to reveal the impact of advanced programming targeted at these high potential startups and current operating companies that have room for rapid growth. 2016/17 will be the first year that performance measure will be track-l via weighted survey response. Note that this measure applies to any company in BC that wants to use innovative techology to increase their competitiveness and ultimately create greater revenue and jobs for BC citizens.

See ***Appendix D: Evaluation of Improved Company Growth*** for a discussion and explanation on how this target has been set and will be measured for 2016/17 onwards.

Financial Plan

Summary Financial Outlook

($ in $ thousands)	Actual 2016 to 2017	Budget 2017 to 2018	Forecast 2018 to 2017	Forecast 2017 to 2018	Forecast 2018 to 2019
Revenue					
Province of British Columbia	6,000	5,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
Internal Program Funding (1)	5,178	5,082	2,078	579	-
NSERC Endowment (2)	-	1,000	800	1,500	2,000
Interest & Other	292	298	108	108	108
Total Revenue	11,470	11,380	11,002	8,187	8,108
Expenses					
Programs and Initiatives	11,019	10,917	8,278	5,968	5,638
NSERC Endowment (2)	-	1,000	800	1,500	2,000
Salaries and Benefits	1,347	1,404	1,817	1,817	1,817
Rent	171	260	297	297	297
Amortization	58	70	63	55	53
Other Operating Costs (3)	278	273	819	810	810
Total Expenses	11,870	11,870	11,002	8,187	8,108
Net Income	1	0	0	0	0
Accumulated Surplus (4)	56,872	56,872	56,872	56,872	56,872
Capital Expenditures (5)	147	50	50	50	50

Note 1: Internal Program Funding represents the use of unrestricted assets and deferred program revenues. The funds expended in 2016/2017 are primarily from the Leading Edge Endowment Fund. In 2016/2017 the balance of the Leading Edge Endowment Fund is forecasted to be fully expended.

Note 2: Accumulated interest from NSERC will provide funding for research activities of BC academic institutions and technology development funding to commercializable projects.

Note 3: Other operating costs include legal, audit, travel, and office expenses.

Note 4: Accumulated Surplus includes the $50 million Natural Resources and Applied Science Research (NSERC) Endowment Fund capital.

Note 5: For 2016/2017, capital expenditures include costs for relocation of BCIC office.

In fiscal year 2007/2008, the Council was charged with accounting an endowment contribution of $50,000,000 from the Ministry of Economic Development. The Endowment capital is permanently restricted. Investment earnings are restricted for the support of training, research and development in natural resources and applied sciences.

($ in $ thousands)	Actual 2016 to 2017	Budget 2017 to 2018	Forecast 2018 to 2017	Forecast 2017 to 2018	Forecast 2018 to 2019
NSERC Endowment Fund	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Interest Accumulated, beginning	2,826	3,360	3,360	3,526	2,986
Annual Investment income	977	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Program expenditures	-	(1,000)	(800)	(1,500)	(2,000)
Administration & Professional Fees	(215)	-	(215)	(215)	(215)
Forecast Interest Balance	3,360	3,360	3,526	2,986	1,864

Key Forecast Assumptions

- The forecast revenues are presented under current government financial requirement guidelines. Provincial funding is anticipated to remain consistent over the next three years. The funding for BCIC is reviewed annually through the budget process.
- Interest earned on investments is forecast to remain stable over the next three years.
- BCIC budgeted $825,000 of its annual provincial funding to support the operation of the Premier's Technology Council (PTC).
- The forecast assumes that the staffing level will remain stable in the following two years after fiscal year 2007-2008.

Sensitivity Analysis

If there are further changes to the level of funding BCIC receives from the Ministry of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services, BCIC's ability to leverage Ministry funds to finance projects, programs and initiatives from other sources may be affected. Such sources may include various organizations within the federal and provincial governments as well as private, public and not-for-profit science and technology organizations. Revenues from all program funders depend on those funders' activities and plans.

Management Perspective on Future Financial Outlook

- BCIC's programs will be primarily funded by the core funding from the Province. BCIC will align its funding to programs that meet its mandate. BCIC will work with all the regional partners and various organizations across the province to develop and deliver programs that accelerate the commercialization of technology and development of entrepreneurs.
- BCIC will only have limited access to its restricted funds (funds accumulated from past years that were not spent and have been directed to future programs). Therefore, the funds that are restricted have not been budgeted for in BCIC's forecasts; however, if economic conditions improve, the use of these funds can be reviewed in future years.
- Interest returns on investments remain low under the current economy, and it is unlikely that the interest rates will change significantly over the next three years.

Appendix

Appendix A: Hyperlinks to Additional Information

Corporate Governance

- Role and membership list of the Board of Directors
- Board Committees and Members
- Names and job titles of senior management
- Governance principles
- Significant reporting relationships

Organizational Overview

- Enabling statute
- Mandate provided in enabling statute
- Vision and values
- Business areas
- Benefit BCIC provides the public
- Financial partners, clients and stakeholders
- Program delivery
- Locations

Appendix B: Top Ongoing Risks for BCIC Operations and Programs

Issues, Risks, and Potential Impacts	Mitigating Strategies
• The programs that BCIC funds are designed to lower the risk that a new entrepreneurial venture will fail. It is possible that these programs will not actually improve outcomes, despite the quality and care taken in their design and delivery.	• BCIC uses course materials developed for entrepreneurial education. BCIC programs are customized for the BC context by local organizations like ACETECH, the Association of Technology CEOs. It is also recognized that some ventures will fail, and their founders will be successful with future ventures, drawing on their experience and learning.
• The regional and educational partners are independent not-for-profit organizations governed by their own boards and management teams. Many have revenue streams from sources other than BCIC. It is a significant operational risk that economic forces in their region or strategic changes within their governance structure might cause them to decline to continue delivering BCIC's programs.	• The program delivery and support burden is divided among several partners at all times, ensuring that if one partner drops out, others can quickly develop capacity to replace them. BCIC provides funding to organizations based on proposals for programs that meet our mandate. We solicit proposals first from existing funded partners. If they cannot meet our requirements, we may use a competitive Request for Proposal process. BCIC requires BC Acceleration Network partners to develop sustainability plans to address future funding issues, which may include less financial support from BCIC.

Appendix C: BCIC's New Health Score

Background

BCIC's Health Score has evolved to deal with two issues that had been identified:

1. Rating under the old system required the rater to make a number of subjective decisions that was found to be inconsistent across raters.
2. There were substantial inconsistencies in scoring across different stages of startup growth; it was impossible to compare startups at different company stages.

Moving Forward

The new Health Score will focus on the progress achieved by startups in the BC Venture Acceleration Program. By emphasizing results: jobs, revenue, investment, patent/trade secrets, and skill development, the subjectivity from the old scoring model is removed.

Advantages of New Health Score

1. **Companies are evaluated using one scoring scheme**: enables fair comparison amongst all companies in the program.
2. **Scores are based on actual progress from Venture Acceleration Program quarterly reports vs. indicators for success:** i.e. jobs, revenue, investment, Market Validation Training, patent/trade secrets.
3. **The model eliminates rater subjectivity**: scoring is based on the progress achieved by each venture, eliminating the need for interpretation required by some indicators.

Interpreting the Health Score

Consistent from the previous Health Score model, a strong score (75+) indicates a venture is on track and on a good trajectory. A score of 50-74 indicates a startup is beginning to demonstrate an increase in jobs, revenue and investments, all indicators of company traction.

Target

BCIC reports on the top quartile of companies, because they are considered to be in a position to achieve success. A target of 85 points has been established. To reach 85, companies on average have achieved a strong mix between results and skills development.

Across all startups, BCIC expects to achieve an average Health Score of 55 points. Startups in the BC Venture Acceleration Program are typically still very early stage; therefore, even an incremental increase in jobs, revenue and investment represents progress. In addition, within a cohort of startups, a mixture of success is to be expected. As such, they are not included in the reporting parameters until they reach a stage where they have gained early-stage commercial traction.

Startups participate in the program for an average of 10 months, and different cohorts rotate through the program each year. Thus, the Health Score targets derived from these different cohorts are not expected to increase substantially year-over-year.

Table 1: The New Health Score Model

Results Achieved (Per Quarter)	**Points Awarded***
Basic Threshold: Any Jobs or Revenue or Investment (excl. Founder**)	+40
Threshold 1: >= 2 Jobs or >= $15K Revenue or >= $20K Investment (excl. Founder**)	+10
Threshold 2: >= 3 Jobs or >= $30K Revenue or >= $40K Investment (excl. Founder**)	+15
Threshold 3: >= 5 Jobs or >= $125K Revenue or >= $125K Investment (excl. Founder**)	+10
Skills Development	
Completed 5 core Market Validation Training Modules	+15
Completed >= 5 Additional Training Topics	+5
Technology Patented / Has Trade Secret	+5

*Each score is awarded on an additive basis, up to a maximum of 100 points. The Health Score will be derived from the average score of all ventures that have been in the BC Venture Acceleration Program for more than three months.
**Founder investment is not included because it does not represent an investment (and endorsement) from a third party.

Appendix D: Evaluation of Improved Company Growth

The evaluation of improved company growth takes into account a number of factors that are widely considered important or vital to a medium-sized, high-potential company looking to gain a competitive advantage, adopt innovative technology and solve industry-driven needs.

Markets, *Talent* and *Capital* are the core thematic pillars of BCIC's advanced access programming. These are the most critical challenges facing high-potential companies with the capacity for rapid growth. The element that crosses all pillars is management capabilities, which can be described as the managements skills, internal planning, optimization and/or capacity needed for a company to take steps towards improving access to market, talent and capital. Improved management capabilities increase the likelihood of success and, as such, it is the most heavily weighted component.

Considering market, talent and capital specifically, the needs of high-potential companies can vary. As such, there is no one factor more important for company growth, and thus the weighting systems among pillars are identical; Each totals 100. Likewise, the discrete steps within the pillars have equal weightings. In this regard, BCIC's advanced access programming will begin with a needs assessment of each company, so that support services are specifically tailored to progress each company from their distinct position to their desired future state.

Table 2: Survey Weighting for Evaluation of Improved Company Growth

1. Talent	**Points***
Basic Threshold: BCIC programs made a positive impact on the overall management capabilities (skills, planning, optimization and/or capacity) necessary for the company to access advanced talent opportunities	+40
Q 1: Company gained increased number of staff as a result of the program	+20
Q 2: Company gained increased and needed expertise on staff as a result of the program	+20
Q 3: Company determined necessary HR capabilities to attract, develop and retain talent	+20
2. Capital	**Points***
Basic Threshold: BCIC programs made a positive impact on the overall management capabilities (skills, planning, optimization and/or capacity) necessary for the company to access advanced capital opportunities	+40
Q 1: Company increased access to existing capital as a result of the program	+20
Q 2: Company gained access to new capital as a result of the program	+20
Q 3: Company determined best approach to financing for the acquisition of capital	+20
3. Markets	**Points***
Basic Threshold: BCIC programs made a positive impact on the overall management capabilities (skills, planning, optimization and/or capacity) necessary for the company to access advanced market opportunities	+40
Q 1: Company gained increased share of existing market as a result of the program	+20
Q 2: Company gained channels to new market(s) as result of the program	+20
Q 3: Company determined best positioning of product/service to meet needs of market	+20

*Each score is awarded on an additive basis, up to a maximum of 100 points per category. The basic category threshold is 40 points, with subset questions awarding additional points depending on the depth of support/assistance received via BCIC programs. The overall measure will be derived from the average survey score of all participants engaged in advance access programming.